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Sen. Gilbert applauds Bush's commitment to community colleges

Lansing – Sen. Jud Gilbert (R-Algonac) expressed support for President George W. Bush's commitment to provide funding to community colleges and job training, as announced during the State of the Union address last night.

The president announced a new "Jobs for the 21st Century" initiative that would increase support for America's community colleges to train workers for the industries that are creating the most new jobs. The plan includes a \$250 million proposal to fund partnerships between community colleges and employers in high-demand job sectors, based on successful pilot programs launched by Bush in 2001 and 2002.

"This initiative could be a boost for St. Clair County Community College in Port Huron," Gilbert said. "Providing more funding for the school's job training programs will help increase enrollment, and will allow current students and unemployed workers to obtain the necessary job skills to get them out into the workforce."

"Given Michigan's present economy, proper training for industries where workers are needed is essential if we want to turn around Michigan's unemployment rate."

In addition to funding for community colleges, the Jobs for the 21st Century plan is designed to provide extra help to middle and high school students who fall behind in reading and math, expand Advanced Placement programs in low-income schools, and invite math and science professionals from the private sector to teach part-time in high schools.

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